

"WOODSTOCK" BARN
South Spring Mill Road
Villanova
Radnor Township
Delaware County
Pennsylvania

HABS NO. PA-197

HABS
PA
23-VILLA
3A-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. PA-197

"WOODSTOCK" BARN

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PA
23-VILLA
3A-

Street Address: South Spring Mill Road, Villanova, Radnor Township,
Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Present Owner: Mrs. Thornton Oakley, 105 South Spring Mill Road,
Villanova, Pennsylvania

Present Occupant: Owner

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement of Significance: This field-stone and frame barn of
1804 has been converted into a residence and studio
for and by the late artist, Thornton Oakley.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:
James Hunter, Jr. - 1804-1849
His widow, Margaret (Benedict) Hunter - 1849-1865
The widow and heirs of his nephew, Maskell Cochran
Ewing - 1865 to date. Present owner and occupier
is Maskell C. Ewing's granddaughter, Amy Ewing
Oakley (Mrs. Thornton Oakley).
2. Date of erection: February, 1804 (Account book of
James Hunter, Jr., in possession of Mrs. Thornton Oakley,
105 South Spring Mill Road, Villanova, Pa.) Also date-
stone "JH 1804" in peak of gable at south end.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers: February 8, 1804,
Samuel Morgan, a local carpenter and director of the
Radnor Library Company, contracted to build the barn
for \$180. The excellent field-stone masonry was done
by Nathan Moore and Jesse Lewis and the owner recorded
that Joseph Ratliff dug the cellar and foundations and
hauled the earth "to the low parts of the meadow for
\$24." These facts are all recorded in the Account Book
of James Hunter, Jr., in the possession of Mrs. Oakley
and have been printed in the article mentioned in Part I,A,6
of this report.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: No information
5. Notes on alterations and additions: Redesigned as house
and studio in 1926 by Thornton Oakley, working with

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architect George Bispham Page. Entirely rebuilt on interior except that main partitions were kept throughout and hayloft kept virtually intact.

6. Important old views and references: Mrs. Oakley owns several nineteenth century photographs of the structure. The relationship of WOODSTOCK BARN with WOODSTOCK and CHUCKSWOOD, an account of the furnishings of WOODSTOCK BARN and biographical information on the Hunters and Ewings, who owned WOODSTOCK BARN, may be found in Francis James Dallett, "The Story of Woodstock," The Bulletin of Radnor Historical Society, Vol. I, No. 8 (Spring, 1958), pp. 3-11.
- B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure: This house was the barn for WOODSTOCK (see report on that house) until the Oakley transformation. Thornton Oakley, artist and illustrator, received many honours including two bestowed by the government of France, the Palmes d'Officier d'Academie and the dignity of Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur. (See his biography in DAB.)
- C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None
- D. Supplemental Material: None

Prepared by F. J. Dallett ^{June} date 1958
For Radnor Historical Society

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement:
 1. Architectural character: This residence, converted from an early (1804) field-stone and frame barn, still retains some details and feeling of the original structure.
 2. Condition of fabric: The building is in excellent condition and is maintained as a residence.
- B. Technical Description of Exterior
 1. Overall dimensions: Not recorded
 2. Foundations: Stone
 3. Wall construction: Original field-stone on north and south ends; same on east facade, first floor; projecting

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second floor on east side is frame as is center section of west side, which embodies the studio window, and door on ramp (old haywagon entrance).

4. Porches, stoops, bulkheads etc.: Frame sleeping porch and kitchen entry installed on north side.
5. Chimneys: Two, of stone, modern. One rises in center of house on wall between studio and parlor (with fireplaces in parlor and studio, dining room and hall on first floor). The other rises from the kitchen at the north end and is for kitchen range.
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Entrances to the stalls on the first floor, east side, were reconverted to one panelled wood door at the south end, then two three-sectioned French windows, and finally two twelve-lighted sash windows. Solid wooden facade on second floor, east side, had six twelve-lighted sash windows and a large nine-sectioned studio window installed. Door installed in center of west facade at head of wagon ramp, giving access through lower section of west studio window. Other windows largely original.
 - b. Windows and shutters: See preceding paragraph.
7. Roof
 - a. Shape, covering: Gabled. Wood shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Simple wood cornice.
 - c. Dormers: None

C. Technical Description of Interiors

1. Floor plans: Barn, stalls on first floor, east side; hay ramp on west side.
First floor: Arcaded terrace on east facade gives onto entrance hall at south end; two main rooms, bath and service also on this floor.
Second floor: Five main rooms, including two-story studio in center, one bath.
Third floor: Two main rooms and two attics (bedrooms on south side, attics on north side are not connected because studio rises in between).
2. Stairways: Two narrow, winding stairways, one from entrance hall to second floor hall and thence up to third; other from kitchen to north or bedroom end of second floor.

3. Flooring: First floor has modern stone floor in hall and dining room; rough original hayloft floor in studio on second floor and in one second-floor bedroom.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plastered walls, all painted, except for studio, which retains old wooden sides with exposed beams above. Beamed ceiling on first floor is original.
5. Doorways and doors: Almost all modern.
6. Trim: Simple door trim is all. Old wooden mantels are not original with barn but were installed when remodelled.
7. Hardware: Modern reproductions H&L hinges, etc.
8. Lighting: Electricity
9. Heating: Central heating. Fireplaces in four rooms, all in operation.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Set in meadow with old shade trees around the house and attractive walled perennial and box garden; planted with cedars and fruit trees on east side. The building faces east.
2. Enclosures: Only enclosed garden mentioned above.
3. Outbuildings: Frame garage and frame open shed which houses a Conestoga Wagon, given by Mrs. Oakley to Radnor Historical Society.
4. Walks: Formal pebbled and flagstone walks within walled garden; incidental flagstone walks outside.
5. Landscaping, gardens etc.: See comments under "General setting and orientation" above.

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